I noticed that you only came up to my shoulder. I know also that you have heavy eyelids, but this is because they are like my mother's."

I: "Then he did imagine his mother's eyes."

MME VAN RYSSELBERGHE: "It seems that he had heard someone talking about his mother say that one of the characteristics of her face was her heavy lids."

I: "Does he recognize faces without difficulty?"

MME VAN RYSSELBERGHE: "With great ease at a distance of ten years. He even recognizes resemblances."

I: "Then I don't understand.

MME VAN RYSSELBERGHE *(who is telling all this):* "And as he was leaving, he also said: *Oh! I have made another discovery: namely, that I don't know anything about art — and that I never have understood anything about it/ "

Back in Paris, 8 November

Met little Louis Rouart, redder and more middle-class looking than ever. As it is a long time since I have seen anyone, my smile suggests an exaggerated joy; he comes along with me. As spotty, as strained conversation as ever; it seems like the spasmodic skirmishes of a fencing bout, but of a bout without courtesy. With the very first words, from the start, he attacks. With him, in spite of myself, I throw up my guard, take on a false, tense attitude, and say nothing natural. What silly things he made me say yesterday! To be sure, I was already tired out by the conversation I had just had with Gerard.

Louis Rouart went with me to Welte/s bookshop, where I ordered Nyrop's grammar for Andre Ruyters. He heard me give the order and thought: three foreign names!! Protestant, cosmopolitan, etc. . . . And as I asked him, on the way out, if he knew that wonderful grammar: "I don't mind telling you" (he in fact told me pompously) "that I never felt the need of grammars to learn French." Nothing could have been

more insulting or more stupid. And I, quite dumbly, out of weakness and kindness, bothered to explain that the first volume of that grammar was "above all historical/' Absurd! Absurd!

And so on. I drop him in front of the *Mercure* (without going in, for I suddenly remember that Tuesday is Mme Rachilde's *day* for receiving visitors), annoyed with him and even more with myself. But when he speaks of calling on me, I reply: "Yes, do/' For, after all, I find him likable. Now 111 never shake him off.

17 November

I am glad that, as soon as I got to Paris, I had to devote myself to that article on the Autumn Salon that Roger Marx had ordered for the